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Beginnings in Agriculture. By ALBERT RUSSELL MANN. New York: Macmillan, 1911. Pp. xii+341. \$0.75.

In several respects this book stands out in marked contrast with the dead level of most agricultural texts written for the seventh and eighth grades. It possesses a literary style of real merit, which holds the attention and invests the commonplace with a certain charm.

Part I, "The Affairs of the Farm," is something of a departure, and is intended to give a setting to what follows, to furnish matter for reading rather than for recitation. The other three parts deal respectively with the soil, farm plants, and farm animals. Each type of plant and animal has a very satisfactory treatment of its history, nature, culture, varieties, and worth. Each of the forty-one chapters is followed by a set of "problems" calculated to set the pupil to thinking, though but few of them are distinctly "review questions." They serve to connect the text with the home and community experiences of the pupil. Some call for direct observation or experimentation, others for home questions or reflection only.

From the standpoint of information the chapters on soil and that dealing with the plant as a living thing are ample for the upper grammar grades, but from another point of view they are disappointing. Agriculture and other forms of nature-study, home economics, and manual training in the grades fail signally of realizing their opportunities if they do not help to decrease the pupil's slavery to the book. The chapters referred to are on the topics *par excellence* calling for demonstration and student experiment; but they use only a trifling part of the wealth of material available. A specific reference to some of the excellent bulletins and manuals on soil and plant experiments would have been of service to the less-informed teacher, who might infer from the small number of experiments given among the problems that no more could profitably be used.

There are an unusually large number of illustrations which really illustrate, though some of the cuts could easily be spared. The book justifies itself, and deserves careful examination by discriminating teachers.

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Mental Discipline and Educational Values. By W. H. HECK. 2d ed. New York: John Lane Co., 1911. Pp. 208.

In the second and somewhat enlarged edition of this book citations from the reports of experiments and discussions which have appeared in the last two years, since the publication of the first edition, have been added, as well as a more complete bibliography. The chapter on the localization of function, which was not very satisfactory in the first edition, has been reduced in length, and in part restated, to the distinct advantage of the book as a whole. The book remains an eminently satisfactory discussion for class use, the review of the experimental studies and the emphasis given them in the longest chapter of the book being of particular value.

It would be most fortunate for the teaching of education and for school practice if more educational subjects could be thus handled and kept up to date.

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